You Are Hungry: *Flâneuring*, Edible Mapping and Feeding Imaginations
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Introduction

Feeding cities is currently emerging as a concern within global, national and local debates.[1] A response to this situation is the concept of 'urban agriculture' (UA): 'The growing of plants and the raising of animals for food and other uses within and around cities and towns.'[2] UA has been conceived at a cities' scale, as a coherent planning strategy and as an individual building.[3]

However, the ability of residents to visualize, conceive and practise UA within the bewildering array of city structures that surround them is exacerbated by the notion that the built environment exists a priori, a product in part of developers, professional designers and planners. Little attention has been given to the actual and potential design contribution of urban food gardeners as a 'dweller landscaper' tactically augmenting the existing city, incrementally adding a bricolage of ideas and practices through everyday actions.[4] Also, while UA is regularly explored as a form of mini-agriculture that questions the dominance of the farm production system, little explored is how UA as an everyday practice may also question the actions of architects, planners, and professional designers in the creation of cities.[5]

This paper argues that in order to understand the position of the resident food gardener in relationship to architectural space, researchers need to embed themselves in landscape at the same scale as the phenomena being researched. Therefore, this research uses walking and talking with local residents in east London to examine how a UA landscape, imaginary and existing, might challenge our ideas of design and authorship.

This paper presents ongoing research drawn from 32 participatory walks with 150 residents and visitors to a 25-hectare (ha) site in east London that formed part of a PhD research. The two-hour walks took place in September 2010 and August 2011. The paper will present the methods, examine the thematic responses of walkers, and conclude with a discussion.

Method

A preliminary stage began in June 2010 when I repeatedly walked a 25-ha site in Hackney, east London, noting all open spaces within the site: parks, grassed areas on housing estates, waste ground, car parks and so forth. Additionally, Google maps were used to view the rooftops and private gardens. A hand-drawn A2 isometric map was created from this research process entitled 'You Are Hungry: an edible urban map of south Hackney'.[6] [fig. 1] Into these open spaces I envisioned various potential food-growing practices depicted by symbols. For example, symbols indicating potential fruit trees, vegetables gardens, compost bins and apiaries.

Buildings were represented as a simple line drawing to give a sense of scale, and actual roads and pavements were not marked. This map also presented some quantitative data about the 25-ha

site, namely the amount of land attributed to different uses. Also represented were existing examples of food gardening, such as an apiary, window boxes and a community orchard. The map combined these snippets of quantitative data with fictional stories about potential everyday food producing activities printed around the edges. These stories create a picture of would-be gardeners, food producing plots, market gardens and beekeepers who might inhabit the 25-ha site [fig. 2].

From 5 to 20 September 2010 and 18 August to 5 September 2011, 32 walks across this site were advertised for local residents and other interested parties via Space Studio and social media.[7] The walks were led by myself and each participant was given a bound copy of the edible map as a guide. The maps were used differently by participants, with some stuffing them in their back pockets immediately, whereas others had them constantly to hand. The map offered an overview of the site but did not have a route marked. I feel that its use was both as a gift and a way-finder.

As we completed the walks and talked about our experiences, walkers often read the map referring back to spaces for discussion or making notes on them. The map becomes a souvenir, a talking point, a provocation for ideas. It was also a way-finder for me that I used throughout the walk to identify locations. The groups were small (eight to ten people), which allowed walkers to contribute their own stories. While the map was designed with the idea that I would personally lead the walks, it has subsequently been used independently by over 25 walkers through the involvement of the Royal Geographical Society, and the map has been exhibited and published.[8]

In all 150 people took part in the walks. Data was collected as photographs, audio recorded semi-structured group discussions, alongside field notes. Data can be considered as both the genera-

tion and collection of 'empirical materials', such as 'interviewing, direct observation, the analysis of artefacts, documents, and cultural records… and personal experience'.[9] The succession of walks followed a similar route so that the taped discussions could be compared spatially. The recordings were transcribed in September 2010 and 2011.

The landscape of this peripatetic research is ordinary, and notably absent are the grand gestures of signature architecture or heritage sites. Most of the private housing and shops date from the Victorian period and the social housing from the 1930s to the 1960s, with two developments from the 1980s. The gentrified Broadway Market – which is full of cafés, delicatessens, organic food shops and restaurants – dominates this area, in marked contrast to the ring of social housing surrounding it.

I approached this walking project as a researcher, artist and local resident. This meant I had considerable knowledge about UA, the locality and its potential. However, I tried to resist imposing too much theory on the walkers therefore allowing their reactions to surface and generate its own 'local' theory. As an approach I followed Henwood and Pidgeon who refer to the need for researchers to read literature but also adopt a stance of 'theoretical agnosticism', a balance between claims about knowing and not knowing.[10]

Broadly, the walks were created as participatory within the general category of qualitative research useful in understanding situated phenomena.[11] To enhance engagement the number of walkers per walk was kept small, avoiding a tourist guide style, so that conversation and discussions among the group could emerge. There was linearity to the research, with 12 stopping points always starting and ending at the same point. In some sense the route chosen was pragmatic; I aimed for the 1,350 m route to be walkable in less than two hours, prioritizing talking without exhausting people's attention.

YOU ARE HUNGRY: AN EDIBLE MAP OF SOUTH HACKNEY

Feeding the 1,425 residents of South Hackney, London, using the 25 hectares of land that surrounds them*
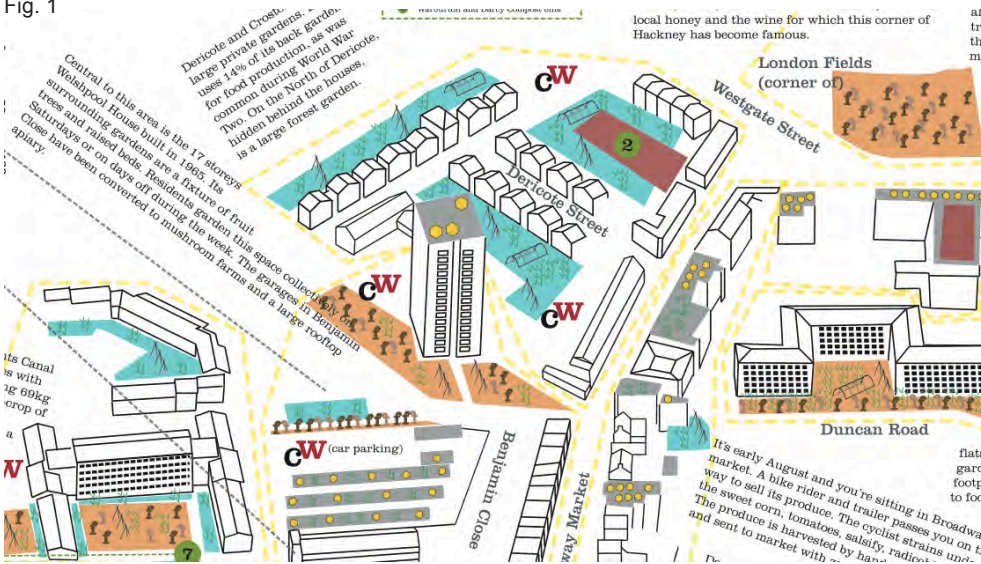

Fig. 1

Fig. 2

Fig. 1: The edible map of Hackney
Fig. 2: Detail: The edible map of Hackney

The 12 stops on the walks are as follows. 1: Warburton Road car park (beehives); 2: Warburton and Darcy Community Garden (1930s social housing estate); 3: London Fields (13-ha park); 4: Duncan House (1930s social housing estate); 5: Welshpool House (1960s tower block); 6: Benjamin Street car parks, Orwell House (1980s social housing estate) [fig. 3]; 7: Whiston Road (1960s five-storey block); 8: Pritchard's Row (1950s social housing estate); 9: Teale Street north side (two-storey housing); 10: Teal Street south side (five-storey social housing estate); 11: The disused Victoria Hospital and grounds; 12: Haggerston community orchard (main audio recording site).

At the start of the route, walkers briefly introduced themselves, providing an overview of their interest in UA and motivation for joining the walk: on the whole they were either connected to food projects, interested in growing food themselves, or professionals working in food-growing-related projects, plus some local residents.

Analysis and Thematic Responses

According to Coffey and Atkinson: 'The process of analysis should not be seen as a distinct stage of research; rather it is a reflective activity that should inform data collection, writing, further data collection, and so forth.'[12] The process of writing about the edible walks therefore began during the collection of audio recordings and field notes. I visualized the conversations as a washing line spreading in many directions, from which the images and notes were hung. This echoes Denzin and Lincoln who talk of the need to see research emerging as 'a meaningful emotional whole, as if at a glance, all at once' and less as a linear overarching narrative, especially as such notes are a few steps removed from direct experience.[13]

I felt a strong need to resist the breaking-up of recorded interviews using codes to develop themes because of the personal interaction created on the walks. I repeatedly listened to interviews, identifying repetitions among data (interviews and field notes). This follows Barnacle's comment on coding that 'the hermeneutic conviction is however that coding, of itself, does not necessarily lead to understanding or insight; rather, the revelatory power of research is animated by the researcher's power of observation, reflection and judgement.'[14] Multiple walks allowed experiences to be analysed and grouped thematically using 'observation, reflection and judgement'. As themes emerged I would start to write paragraphs, which explored these themes. There was no measurable quantity for thematic repetitions but a sense of importance grew from my interpretation of how much emphasis residents placed on the activity.

Three main thematic responses emerged from the walks. Firstly, the subject of edible urban landscape, secondly the reaction to the culture of cultivated urban landscapes. Finally the multiple desire-lines presented by urban food gardening, which cut across the intended landscape of the planned architecture. These themes are broad and I have grouped conversations below to reflect the process of analysis as I experienced it. Wolcott states that 'qualitative researchers need to be storytellers… ground[ing] their reflections in observed experience'.[15] Thus the task at hand is the 'reconstruction of social phenomena… fashion[ed] out of… transactions with other men and women'.[16] Therefore there is a need to take account of the description of the essential experience while also developing academic theory.

Moreover this is a co-authored activity, negotiated between people and I was fully aware of the fact that I was constantly presenting myself to people in order to conduct research. The thematic section below tells the story of the research process, prioritizing the people within the landscape. In brackets after each quote is the gender of the interviewee and the date of the interview.*

Fig. 3: Benjamin Street car park

Edible Urban Landscapes

The notion of the 'edible urban landscape' is one in which the city starts to take some responsibility for an element of its food production. The emergence of this theme from the conversations came as little surprise as the subject of food and cities framed the walks. One walker in September summed this up, 'it's interesting food… when we think about food, we think about survival, talking about food, about growing… raises up most of the important questions' (m 19/9/10). The first garden on the walks is the well-established Warburton and Darcy community garden. One walker simply commented 'I liked this the most', echoing many such sentiments (f 07/09/10). A female walker said, 'it's like pre-enclosure common land' (f 12/09/10). Generally people responded well to the small examples of existing raised beds, well-established herbs, vines and compost bins of this decade-old garden. Warburton and Darcy is a mature community garden requiring no imagination.

What surprised almost all walkers was the location: hidden behind a 1930s council estate on a large expanse of grass that would have been designed simply as amenity grass. One local walker was shocked that in spite of living locally for years, this place was a secret garden commenting that, 'this is totally my local area… I live on London Fields and I hadn't seen… been to Warburton and Darcy' (f 17/9/10). Despite the initial surprise from participants, one walker commented that after spending just a few minutes in the space it felt quite natural, quite normal to have this garden here surrounded by the planned council estate. Walkers generally drifted off in this space, smelling the herbs, occasionally looking into the first floor flats. This space brought up discussions of names of food plants. Walkers started to list the fruit and vegetables growing like shopping lists: beans, lettuce, tomatoes, strawberries, grapes, spinach, figs and pumpkin. Walkers asked why there aren't any doors from the flats into the garden? The architecture seems to have been planned against a use that now seems obvious. Motifs of inclusion and exclusion are prominent, as one walker said, 'Like I probably won't think I'd be allowed to go into some spaces, but you are… just thinking people might think oh no that's their bit' (f 19/09/10). The garden has a welcoming sign and is completely fenced but I remarked that the garden, at least to my knowledge, is never locked. [fig. 4]

By contrast, the 17-storey tower block of Welshpool House is encircled by an unfenced patchwork of concrete, grass, broken benches and dead municipal flowerbeds. On one bed sat an elderly woman, watching several local men drinking and talking. These people are regular users of this landscape, perhaps its only users, certainly the only ones I've seen. I read from the edible map a suggestion that this landscape could be full of fruit trees and raised beds collectively gardened by residents on weekends and days off. A walker responded by saying that the fruit trees are nice but she felt exposed, as the landscape is basically an extended entrance to the tower block, crossed only to get home. She wouldn't want to 'hang out' there despite or because of the CCTV. Another walker commented that food gardening may reduce the need to have CCTV. Ideas of UA as an everyday practice seem to directly emerge from a sense of safety or issues of public performance, which in some ways create a literal connection to the concept of food security.

Crossing the Regents Canal, we walked to the foot of a six-storey 1960s block at the corner of Whiston Road and Goldsmiths Row. Here a small food garden has been emerging, jutting out as one walker describes it, like 'the bow of a ship' into a sea of grass that surrounds it (f 07/09/10). I have seen the woman who gardens this busy road junction plot once during my many walks. One walker said, 'I think what she is doing is brave because she's quite exposed… in that corner there… it's something completely different and people don't like something different' (f 12/09/10).

Fig. 4: Hidden entrance to Warburton and Darcy community garden

We moved on across the road to Pritchard's Row, and Teale Street. Here the grassed moats around estates have been colonized by some residents, peppering the wide grass moats with small personal food gardens [fig. 5].

Pumpkins climbed walls, aided by old cot bars, runner beans concealed the 1-m-high metal fence that encloses the grass. Walkers touched the common runner beans, as if they were an exotic plant, and commented that you just don't expect to find them there. Another walker remarked that they live across the street and hadn't noticed these plants growing because they are usually in a hurry to get somewhere. One participant picked up on this, commenting that once you start growing food you notice all the other food growers in the neighbourhood and want to converse with them. There was a real sense of excitement at the sight of a 4-m canopy of knotted rope suspended from above the first floor of a flat, extending over the front garden onto the street railings. Beneath, large gourds hung and grew [fig. 6]. 'It seems like they are saying I want to be living on a farm, give me more space!' (m 12/09/10), noted one walker. Food grown so close to the edge of the pavement, and sometimes onto it changed the street experience for one walker: 'It's beautiful because it softens it' (f 12/09/10). It's not just visual, another walker commented, because you can smell the coriander growing.

Walkers were not always convinced about the need for UA; for example, one walker stated that 'the justification for food growing [is difficult]… because industrially grown food is remarkably cheap' (f 12/09/10). One walker stated that the social significance 'might be more important than the plants… for the effort you put in you can get your carrots and potatoes cheaper' (m 05/09/10). He used the cinematic metaphor of the 'MacGuffin'. A MacGuffin is a narrative plot device (mainly associated with Alfred Hitchcock), which provides the energy to push a narrative into motion yet in and of itself is not impor-

tant and does not get resolved.[17] It must grab the attention of the audience, but it can be forgotten or remain unconcluded. In this case it is the intention to grow food. It has to be there initially to ignite the residents but would soon become less relevant.

A walker commented on this, 'even if it's not eventually about growing food per se… because maybe the best thing isn't just to use a plot of land to be productive or grow your own food, at least it kind of gets people thinking, growing stuff' (m 19/09/10). Within this theme we can see that the concept of local food growing connects to a great many subjective feelings about access to space, connections with neighbours and knowledge before practice.

Sociocultural Landscape

The themes of the sociocultural landscape emerged across many of the sites: social interactions, sharing resources and knowledge. For example, standing in front of some of the wide moats of grass that run alongside Ade House, Pritchard's Row, where a handful of gardeners have established small vegetable gardens, a walker who lives along the same street commented: 'You can't actually start it [gardening] without talking to your neighbours… it's not yours… you need to get permission… you're forced into a dialogue with [neighbours], ones you never really talk to' (m 05/09/10).

This dialogue isn't always sympathetic. It is rare to meet gardeners on the walks, and I only managed to converse with a few over the period of research. On that day, luckily a Bangladeshi man was harvesting his red spinach, or 'lal shak', and he was happy to chat in broken English. We were a group of eight people and attracted attention. A passerby interrupted us, voicing her mild dislike of the food-growing practice on the basis that the gardeners are breaking the rules: 'They're not allowed to do that'. She joined our group standing on the pavement looking on at the gardening. We showed a clear support of the gardening and she

Fig. 5

Fig. 6

Fig. 5: Existing UA in Pritchard's Row
Fig. 6: Hanging gourds on Teale Street

softened her response slightly saying: 'It's OK but they don't have permission really.' Later, one walker commented that if you're just putting ornamental flowers in 'they're not as contested… if you wanted to… put a flower bed of roses in I don't think you would have as much problem as people putting vegetables in… I guess maybe there's an element of people resenting that someone's getting something out of it… if there's food' (f 21/09/2011).

One walker, who was also a food grower, followed on from this by saying that 'when I pass a nice garden, and see a gardener… I feel tempted to say something… because you do appreciate someone doing something' (f 05/09/10). A garden therefore becomes a visual commons; which can be enjoyed or disliked. As one walker stated: 'I particularly liked the vegetables that were growing along the railings, thought it was a great use of space… and nice to see it so close to the general public, so that they get the chance to appreciate it as well… I imagine some people walk past it and don't notice it' (m 21/09/11).

Others felt that food growing in public should be debated as a return to the idea of commons for urban residents. This appeared particularly germane when we stopped in London Fields, which was common land in the nineteenth century.[18] A small corner of the fields is the third stop on the walk. It has 'traditional' close-cropped grass and a concrete ping-pong table, which had two people enjoying a game.

I read from the map my suggestion of what the space could be used for: 'This leisure corner of London Fields opens out northwards and features 20 dwarf apples trees. Each tree produces approx 40 kg of fruit, with an overall harvest of 4,700 apples. In September, the park becomes a festival space and the various market gardeners and local food growers take over the park to celebrate. They sell red cabbages, onions, broad, French and runner beans, as well as local honey and the wine for which this corner of Hackney has become famous.'[19]

In contrast to the previous community garden, and like much of the following walk, none of this is happening – at least currently. To some walkers this absence brought frustration. It requires them to question what they see. In others it brought a quick response – for example: 'I guess it is good in a way because it gets the conversation going about that and then there's debate and then you can see what people feel' (f 19/09/10). Some walkers knew that London Fields was once 'common' land for grazing sheep but remarked that this open space is less of a 'common' than a scarce resource. Another walker added that the space is still common land but for grazing humans consuming beer and barbeques. One walker felt that in order to open up these spaces to productive practices we need a new form of communication, or perhaps to reconnect to an old forgotten one. She bemoaned the fact that in urban areas, 'we don't have a language for cooperating… about our space and the space we occupy with others' (f 14/09/10).

These ideas about the commons are contrasted with private spaces, which make up only 0.6 ha within the 25 ha site compared to 2.6 ha of public space. One walker summed this up: 'You can do this in your back garden where you don't have these social issues… it's the scale of balancing what you've got, what you need… what's possible with those other people, so actually you have to try and negotiate needs… someone needs a hobby, someone needs to produce something, someone needs some food… more gifting of crops… to people who are not growing in order for them to be happy… and maybe that's a way that ten people can grow in an estate that 40 families live in… there has to be some kind of link for everyone' (m 19/09/10). Whenever the subject emerges, generally walkers have been aware that in most inner-London boroughs, space is tight, scarce and a shared resource.

One resource that has often been discussed is knowledge. On the whole walkers feel that they don't have explicit knowledge of how to grow food. For example, 'I have some knowledge but it does seem quite scary, if someone said let's dig a community garden… what use would I be?' (m 12/09/10). Other walkers have argued that the epistemological harvest will develop and emerge alongside practice. Discussing the London Fields orchard I have sketched on the edible map, one local walker said: 'I think that knowledge spreads quite quickly so that if someone in London Fields was picking apples from an apple tree… and plums… then people would notice it and go aaarrh OK!' (f 21/09/11). Some have been more nervous: 'Orchards take looking after, the fruit is a good thing but the trees don't just manage themselves so you still have to have the knowledge, that has to come from somewhere' (f 21/09/21). Another walker was more upbeat: 'But in every estate of 200, or 400 people there's gonna be people who know how to look after it… I know in the estates near me there's two or three people' (f 21/09/21). As this is largely an imaginary edible urban landscape, it provides a way for walkers to rehearse some of their feelings, debates and reactions to food gardening. These feelings are the core of how a community might instigate UA. The above demonstrates that we should be careful when using the term 'agriculture' when implying a simple efficiency in a dense urban setting. As one walker reminded us, we do not have an enabled language for sharing community resources, which would be vital to developing city agriculture.

Desire in Landscape

Desire in landscape deals with the notion that, as Ward writes, 'cities grow and develop on two levels, the official, theoretical level and the popular, actual, unofficial level'.[20] The dialogue among walkers about food gardening has been focused on the variety of recycled objects assembled by the existing gardeners: cot bars, old catering buckets, a glass shower and a laundry basket, for example. All these objects and the associated daily practice contrast with the existing architectural space of delineated pavement, fences, grass and brick. For example, in Pritchard's Row growers use a car roof, as well as a mass of tangled bamboo, broken wood and string. Atop the bamboo canes are plastic bottles with faces drawn on and a few more complete scarecrows. As one walker observed, 'some of my favourites are just seeing people, like, salvaging bits and bobs, doing their higgledy piggledy things outside their gardens' (f 19/09/10).

This bricolage is usually well received, for example one walker said: 'That string thing for me was like sculpture' (f 19/09/10), commenting on a vast rope canopy supporting pumpkins. There is also the sense that the city benefits from these additions with one participant saying that: 'Making food growing part of the infrastructure of the city… it is a perception issue that food is not very tidy' (f 14/09/10). For other walkers it is a local story: 'That real connection with the place that you're living in, I mean I think growing food gives you that connection, like we were talking about with nature, giving you a sense of where you are… I mean that guy… seeing him implement changes and really owning the space.'

The food gardener that has started the plot on the corner of Whiston Road [fig. 7] has been commented on by many participants: 'I like the woman [on Whiston Road] who is barging out ever so slightly and her vine is creeping up… and I like the thought that every morning you wake up and water your garden before the sun comes up and that's an anarchist act in itself, just by taking over that public space' (f 14/09/10). There is a sense that walkers feel everyday practices are inherently incremental, never strategic. One walker remarks about the same woman: 'Her slowly moving out… the investment is incremental isn't it?… she puts a bit more work in [each year] and gets something' (f 19/09/10). As one walker stated, when we

talked about how intimidating empty space is and the advantages of creeping across the landscape: 'Having a big [space] all of a sudden is actually quite intimidating, you're like that's tons of work… doing a little bit at a time and building outward… I can do a bit more now' (f 10/09/10).

One walker made a direct comparison between the strategies of building and the emergence of multiple loci: 'I don't think there's a blueprint for this… each [space] is going to have its different character… and people in it… different troubles and triumphs' (f 12/09/10). Such a practice is not merely a counter-culture but is also practical: 'If it's centralized you've got the problem of everything being done in the same way… the fact is that there's loads of different cultures doing things the way that they do it… within that it means you've got loads of different knowledge about the way to do the same thing' (f 12/09/10).

Standing below the tower block we are equidistant from 3,000 m² of single-storey garages and an edible forest garden, hidden behind a Victorian terrace. The forest garden is growing in an old paddock, used when horses were ever-present in cities. It would have been hard to tell a Victorian that the ubiquitous horse would disappear from cities, to be replaced by a forest garden. Nevertheless, that's what happened. As we walk towards the rows of garages I ask the question: 'So what will the garages become in the future after cars have gone?' One walker quickly asked if they are still used as garages. We both knew the answer is no. I have seen a speedboat in one, another used for storage, while a third has deckchairs that two local residents bring out and sit on in front of the garage. Practical suggestions for food growing have been shouted out by participants: 'Mushrooms?', 'Rhubarb?', 'White asparagus?' [fig. 3].

Discussion

Walking has been explored as functional, artistic, a déambulation or anti-walk, or polemic.[21] Solnit notes that walking was once 'part of the continuum of experience', but is now taken as an explicit choice.[22] Ingold links walking directly to talking by asking: 'When did our walk begin? When will it end… walking in this regard, is much like talking, and both are quintessential features of what it takes to be a human form of life.'[23] Walking and researching is therefore a process, unlike the athletic race that begins with a bang and ends with a winner. Walking creates knowledge through performance requiring senses, movement and bodily interaction.[24]

Careri discusses how sedentary architecture and the nomad (or wanderer) are not necessarily oppositional but connected through path creation via walking. The city is seen as a series of walks made sedentary over time: 'The sedentary path structures and gives life to the city, in nomadism the path becomes the symbolic place of the life of the community.'[25] Viewing the city as a walker or nomad therefore recreates the sense that the city is still being created through the laying down of new paths via this edible pilgrimage. In much the same way that cattle were walked cross-country to London for slaughter, creating edible pathways, or migratory peoples search for seasonal food; walking and food have always been linked.[26]

Walter Benjamin turned wandering in cities or *flâneuring* into a serious study: termed 'botanizing on the asphalt', whereby the *flâneur* travels around the city following the phenomena *in situ*: walking and observing, wandering and wondering. For Benjamin, the city of signs, buildings, people and chance encounters speak of an ecology 'like a crackling twig' under his foot.[27]

The planned use of walking as research therefore forms part of an ongoing literature which is often ignored precisely because it is ongoing and hard

Fig. 7: Whiston Road gardener

to contain when it comes to research. Walking this edible perambulation returns us to the city as a hunter-gatherer, seeking knowledge and food, and not as a commuter with an efficient A-to-B routine.[28] The walking also forces a direct experience of landscape that is often absent in cities. Journeying on foot allows for an intimate discussion to take place using all of our senses to create dynamic responses situated close to the phenomena of research. This also requires the researcher to witness and participate rather than control: allowing conversations to dwell longer, drift, or suddenly stop, and noting these changes in field notes.

Recording conversation as we walked proved difficult due to background noise and in the end most of the audio-taped discussions took place seated in the bucolic peace of Haggerston Community Orchard. While this was a disappointment, it meant that photography and field notes became more important. Field notes were also less intrusive especially during the initial stage of a walk before people have become relaxed.

Edible Urban Landscape:
We Are Not Hungry…Yet
Despite the walks being based on food growing, during them we tasted little urban produce. We did taste some honey from the rooftop apiary in Warburton Street, and gleaned some plums, grapes and herbs. Conversation sometimes started with the explicit subject of urban food growing, but much like *flâneuring* would soon begin to drift. Walkers might begin by admiring the vegetables in close-up, but quickly the surrounding railings, walls and pavements would be pulled into the discussion. The fluid biomass and sedentary architecture mingle. As the season progresses from June onwards, this infrastructure slowly vanishes amid the biomass only to reappear in late September as the plants wither and die. This type of *in situ* investigation allows a greater sense of active contextualization between the differing components of the urban milieu, often specified

by the participants rather than the author and the map. Within the process, food gardening becomes less of a singular subject; it becomes blended with issues of the design, use or potential reuse of urban space.

Often UA is bracketed by the issue of food security – nutritionally adequate food for all citizens through economic models of food provision.[29] Food sovereignty has emerged as a concept in response to this model, which states that: 'Food sovereignty is a precondition to genuine food security… we have the right to produce our own food in our own territory.'[30] The walk conversations show that territory in this sense would read as both space and architecture with sovereignty meaning ascendancy or at least influence over territory and cultivation.

As Richard Mabey writes: 'The development of cultivation was perhaps the single most crucial event informing our modern notions of nature. From that point on the natural world could be divided into two conceptually different camps: those… managed and bred for the benefit of humans, and those which are "wild", continuing to live in their own territories on, more or less, their own terms.'[31] Currently, UA in relation to modern city design seems to fall culturally into the latter camp, developing its own territorial practice that may initially seem 'wild'. However, given the formality of the modern city, almost anything placed against its straight and prescribed lines would seem contradictory and divergent. As Pugh writes: '"Natural" is the cultural meaning read into nature, meaning determined by those with power and money to use nature instrumentally, as a disguise, as a subterfuge, as a pretence that things were always thus, unchangeable and inevitable.'[32] Food growing, especially when it occupies designed spaces, challenges this 'subterfuge' that grassed monocultures which encircle housing estates for example are anything but 'unchangeable and inevitable'. This is not to set up a dualism between the architect and the resident, but to express the need

Fig. 8: The failed fragmented landscaping around Welshpool House

to examine the polarity in the relationships between the desires of intention and the desire of use.

Sociocultural Landscape: Anonymous Spaces

There was a clear sense that studying the urban landscape at this scale and speed was a revelation to some participants. It unveiled a great many spaces that had not been valued or even recognized – literally seen – by some local walkers. For example, there is an estate map on the wall of Warburton House, showing the Warburton Estate. The buildings are named and marked in orange but the grassed area and hard standing isn't, it's invisible. These designed spaces are left anonymous, which, as Ravetz states is 'a barrier to their recognition and hence utilisation as part of the estate environment'.[33] This is clearly true on the nearby Duncan Road estate where the grassed area is made inaccessible by fencing. It is a commanding 'open' yet unnamed space. Emile Zola once said of a grassed public square: 'It looks like a piece of nature that did something wrong and was put in prison.'[34]

Releasing this space for productive use requires more than just notations on a map. As Careri comments, discussing how walking has traditionally constructed empty landscape: what is needed is 'the ability to know how to see in the voids of places and therefore to know how to name these places'.[35] We know this because it is no coincidence, for example, that the road running off Duncan Road is called Sheep Lane.

These facts have not gone unnoticed among walkers, with one group creating epithets for streets based on UA potential: the corner of Teale Street becomes Strawberry Corner, and Pritchard's Row becomes Coriander Row because of the herb's scent. Local food production becomes a primeval marker, a new reference point born of bodily interaction with the landscape.

On site collection of data reveals stories about the site that would not be revealed from digital maps. Many of the spaces we looked at are too small to appear as more than a single line on many maps. Looking over these spaces, walkers have commented on how they would change sites: add a hedge, a welcome sign or fruit trees. As we continued talking, our conversations gradually augmented the architectural spaces. These are spaces that were clearly designed and that have so clearly failed [fig. 8].

Desire in Landscape:
Intention and Everyday Use

Architecture has embodied energy locked within its fabric; a measure of the energy spent during manufacture. Once residents have moved in, the building's main energy requirements are measured by the everyday use by residents: its energy-in-use. Similarly, desire, in the form of design intentions, gets locked into the urban fabric. Our daily use often contradicts this embodied desire, evident in the crisscross paths worn into the grassed areas of parks and open spaces; pedestrians take journeys contrary to the tarmac-prescribed footpaths, creating 'desire lines'. While these desire lines are difficult to trace outside of parks, it is safe to assume they exist all over the city. They are perhaps briefly visible when it snows, or when wet concrete pavements are laid – an opportunity to leave indelible footprints.

In a sense, this research follows a desire line: the 'desire in-use' of residents to reuse, modify and augment urban spaces 'productively' through food gardening, generating a direct relationship to urban human-environmental relations. This is what Turner calls 'housing as a verb', the 'process or activity of housing', contrasted to housing as a noun, an object, as something considered complete when the architect leaves.[36] The architect's embodied desire represents the prescribed design, the expected use for the building, now being contrasted with the resi-

dent's desire-in-use. Mostly our walkers expressed sympathy with the nascent practice, enjoying the contrast of the tidy modern city and the 'improvisatory joining in with formative processes'.[37] Szczelkun argues, in his historical study of Plotlands (pre-1948 self-build housing), that aesthetics take decades to develop a sense of sophistication.[38] For example, many Plotland houses that survived the mass post-Second World War extinction are now protected either by a high market value or a distinct ecology.[39]

One of the clear responses from walkers was the realization and appreciation of the incremental changes that food gardening brings. Such incremental changes are described by Allen as a 'restless landscape', supposedly controlled by planning and architecture, yet under the continuous influence of residents' diurnal desires.[40] Longstaffe-Gowan extends this across the landscape of the built environment to include the idea that 'all vernacular creations, whether gardens or buildings, are constituents, and therefore, products of our everyday life… the product of practice, not theory'.[41] It is what Bernard Lassus poetically labels the practices of 'habitants paysagistes', or 'dweller landscapers, which unveils the contradiction between the elements they wish to add and the original structures which did not take them into account'.[42]

Critically, it is necessary to examine food gardening, and its interaction with architectural space, to see how these discourses combine within the built environment. Hill for example, suggests architecture promotes 'models of experience that suggest a manageable and passive user, unable to transform use, space and meaning'.[43] Similarly, agriculture promotes a passive consumer, whose 'food comes from shops'.[44] A unsatisfied user who wanted to grow food within urban spaces would need to transform space, use and their food system. For example, Boudon examines how residents of Le Corbusier's Pessac housing estate modified the standardized design over a 50-year period (1921-1970).[45] In the

preface, Henri Lefebvre writes: 'They took what was offered to them and worked on it, converted it, added to it. What did they add? Their needs.'[46] Our 'needs' especially in the urban environment will be to develop a sustainable local food-growing practice based on both security and sovereignty, addressing the need for a beautiful city that can enunciate agriculture both as culture but also as a nascent folk-art constantly in development.

Closing Remarks

Urban agriculture is increasingly being advocated through local policy, NGO campaigns, architecture and embraced at a community level.[47] As a method of research the map functioned as a provocation to participants regarding how we might image this emerging around the most familiar and ordinary landscapes of our cities. It did not provide answers to predefined questions, but instead tried to open up a space for discussion. Working through Space Studio as artist in residence also conferred the advantage of framing the map as art and not 'truth'. As Harmon writes: 'Geographers submit to a tactic agreement to obey certain mapping conventions… artists are free to disobey.'[48]

The edible map presents both a distortion and an interpretation of the space mapped, relative to specific situations of 'spatio-temporal practices'.[49] The drawn map effaced the streets, roads and pavements – as if it had snowed. This unlocked the landscape normally 'striated by walls, enclosures, and routes between enclosures'.[50]

One pleasant surprise for me, something that eluded walkers, was watching the landscape change subtly over the duration of the walks as the fruit ripened and was harvested; the verdant summer growth rapidly giving way to the ochre of autumn. I doubt there has been an urban phenological study of food growing on housing estates. It should be stressed that this paper is an investigation into UA from the viewpoint of the resident

walker, and not the gardener. Gardeners will have their own stories.

A walker remarked that, despite living locally for several years, he had never stopped to consider the open space, it was 'simply there'. Our conversations about food growing break the cohesion of architectural space. Skoller makes a similar point describing the attempts by avant-garde films of the 1960s and 1970s to fracture traditional forms of passive cinematic consumption, breaking the seamless cinematic space by confronting viewers with 'the film medium as a phenomenon' of a 'highly developed illusionistic nature'.[51] In this instance, the illusion of architectural space being 'simply there' is confronted, critiqued and revised.

Ultimately, food growing has to happen somewhere. Therefore the context of landscape, territory and control over resources is important to understand. We use various words to describe food production, for example we use 'farm' or 'fields' for rural food, or 'allotments' for planned spaces to grow food privately. These words also predict our understanding of what we expect from practice. Olwig writes that the landscape 'of earth, fields, pastures, country… engenders a sense of belonging that generates landscape as the place of dwelling and doing in the body politic of a community'.[52]

The territory used for this research is not the open field of the allotment or private garden but the prescribed yet unnamed space of the 'estate' that constantly declares its embodied functioning.[53] Latterly, the declaration for food growing is also being heard, yet the reverberations from these social enunciations last only too briefly with the loci. Through participation I have been able to observe and listen for these reverberations, which begin to create an understanding of food gardening that takes into account its multiple everyday engagements of daydreaming, talking and gardening while also interacting with the urban blueprint. Under-

standing this is important because currently little research has been done in the global north about how residents need to change and engage with space to create food gardens and how this might influence local production-orientated priorities so vital to the feeding of cities.

* Editors' comment: Against our standard editorial practice and grammatical revision suggestions to the author, all interview responses as here transcribed have been retained precisely as submitted due to the insistence of the author.

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Biography

Mikey Tomkins is a PhD student at the University of Brighton. His research looks at community food growing as a contribution to both everyday space and urban agriculture. The edible map project formed part of the scoping phase for the PhD research helping to explore people's reaction to the idea of urban food growing through visualization.